8. The Depreciation on Computers has been allowed @ 60%.
9. In the Budget 2001-02, the park rate of customs duty continues @ 35%. Customs duty surcharge @ 10% has been abolished on all imports, in general but Special Additional Duty (SAD) @ 4% continues on all imports, except specific exemptions. In the 2000-01 Budget, Customs duty on Computers and Peripherals had been reduced from 20% to 15% and continues to be same. The Customs duty on all storage devices, integrated circuits, microprocessors, data display tubes and deflection components of colour monitors also continues at 0%. In the 2001-02 Budget, Customs duty on Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items of WTO (IT and Telecom products) has been reduced from existing 20-25% to 15%. The concessional rate of customs duty for specified raw materials for the electronics industry continues. Customs duty on parts of Telecom reduced to 5%. 32 items (additional) of Capital Goods allowed at a concesional duty of 5% for the manufacture of semiconductors.
10. In the Budget 2001-02, the Central Excise duty structure has been rationalised from multiple rates to single rate of 16% and single rate of Special Excise Duty (SED) @ 16%.
11. Second hand capital goods upto 10 years old have been made freely importable.
12. Information Technology Software is exempted from Customs and Excise Duty.
13. EOU / EPZ / EHTP units are exempted from payment of IncomeTax on export profits, upto 2010, in terms of Section 10A and 10B of the Income Tax Act.
14. Exemption of withholding tax on interest on External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) has been extended to the IT sector.
15. Tax holiday under provisions of Section 80-IA (Infrastructure Status) has been extended to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Broadband Network providers.
16. To induce more investment for R&D activities, a weighted deduction of 125% on the sums paid to any university, college or an institution or a Scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research has been provided.
17. Information Technology Act 2000 has been enacted. This act deals with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other information security related legal aspects. This will encourage expansion of e-commerce through internet.

Internet access to North Eastern States

2663. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the action plan to provide Internet access to the entire North Eastern Region;

(b) the details of the ongoing infrastructure projects in the NER, indicating the amount sanctioned, amount utilized, timeframe for completion and the target achieved so far in respect of each of the project; and

(c) the steps taken by his Ministry to increase the bandwidth and to lay Optical Fibre Cables in th entire NER?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) North Eastern Region includes North East States and Assam. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has opened 17 Internet nodes in North-East Region. Dial up Internet access is available in the district headquarters of North-East Region on local call basis. Apart from this, private ISPs have started Internet service in North-East Region.

The details of Telecom Development for the year 2001-02 in North-East Region are as under:-

(i) In BSNL, the funds allotted to North-East Region on provisional basis are Rs. 429.84 crores.

(ii) BSNL target for the optical fibre and microwave medium are 1364 and 700 route kilometer respectively. Out of this, 7.2 route kilometers of optical fibre and 70 route Kilometer of Microwave have been completed as on 30.6.2001.

(iii) The target for Main Automatic Exchange-1 (MAX-1) exchange and Direct Exchange Line (DEL) for North East Region is 80,700 and 1,53,500 respectively. Out of this, 24,980 MAX-1 lines and 26,119 DELs have been commissioned as on 30.6.2001.

Under Community Information Centre (CIC) programme of Ministry of IT, a scheme with estimated cost of Rs. 220 crores is under implementation for setting up CICs at 487 block headquarters of seven North-East States and Sikkim. Thirty CICs have been set up as pilot project in the North-East Region during 2000 at an estimated cost of Rs. 15 crores.

Institutions under information technology

†2664. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an expansion of industries under the Information Technology sector in the country;

(b) if so, the number of institutes functioning under this sector at the end of March, 1999, March, 2000 and March 2001, State-wise; and

(c) the value of trade carried out annually by these institutes in each State?

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.